

TOWN OF HUDSON  
MEETING TYPE: Regular Council Meeting  
380 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
HUDSON, WY 82515  
July 11, 2023

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Mayor Oler called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 6:08p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call was announced.

**Governing Body Present:** Mayor Sherry Oler, Councilmembers, Archie Hanson, and Zeke Bonella were present. Councilman, Brady Hamilton was excused.

**City Staff Present:** Clerk-Treasurer, Kathy Shoopman and Attorney, Rick Sollars were present.

**Audience:** None

**Public Comments:** None

**Consent Agenda:**

**Minutes:** correction or approval of the minutes of the June 20, 2023, Council Meeting.

Correction or approval of the minutes of the Public Hearings held June 27, 2023.

**Financial Report:** Correction or approval of the June 30, 2023, financial report.

**Payment of Bills:** Corrections or approval of the payment of bills for July 2023.

Mayor Oler asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the June 2023, council minutes, public hearing minutes, financial report, or payment of bills. There were none.

Councilman Zeke Bonella moved to approve the consent agenda, minutes, financial report, and payment of bills, seconded by Councilman Archie Hanson. The motion unanimously passed.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Mayor's Report  
July 2023

**Note to the Hudson Volunteer Fire Department:** Again, my hope is this will be the last town council meeting held in the fire hall! You guys are all rock stars in my book for putting up with us! Flooring installation should start on the 10<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall and should take about a week. Afterwards, the plumber can finish, and we should be able to move in after our IT guy transfers our service back to Town Hall.

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Wyoming Water Development Commission: The site visit for the WWDC Level 1 Master Plan study is scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Fire Hall, George Moser (WWDC) will be running the meeting. The engineering firms interested in bidding for the job will attend and look things over and ask questions.

Mosquito Spraying: Lander sprayed mosquitos in Hudson 2 times so far. Harry may take over mosquito spraying if he renews his license, and the spraying equipment is ready to go. I believe this change will result in better coverage.

Flood Mitigation: I met with Homeland Security this month to move forward with a permanent flood mitigation plan for Hudson. I must review an Army Corps of Engineers study completed for Hudson several years ago. Afterwards, I will meet again with Homeland Security, create a plan, and apply for a grant to start the project. This process may take several years but since Hudson is proactively seeking a permanent remedy, Homeland Security will provide more assistance for flooding until the project is complete.

Sewer Lagoon: Kim Houle and I met with Kyle and Uri at HDR regarding identifying sewer lagoon repair/replacement priorities. Upon town council approval, I will apply for a Rural Development grant or two to start with an assessment. I emailed Bill Carson at Midwest Assistance Program to ask if they can help us.

Water Meter Loan: Midwest Assistance Program is preparing the Hudson's water distribution system map and upon completion, I will submit the map to HDR so they may start the bid process.

WRVC Signs and Svilar Park Outdoor Grant: I continue working with the WRVC on the installation of a digital sign for Hudson and I am happy to report we are making progress. Also, Jenny Hamilton and I continue to be in touch, and she continues to gather bids to support Hudson's application for the WRVC Outdoor Area Grant to complete the upgrade project at Svilar Park.

FCAG: This month's FCAG meeting was primarily focused on the budget and appointment of new executive board members. I was nominated, I objected, but everyone else voted me in as Secretary/Treasurer. I am trying to think positively about it, I hope Hudson will reap an additional benefit from my participation! So far, we had a budget breakfast meeting Thursday morning, and I received valuable information on who to contact regarding help hiring a certified peace officer. I am told there are ways Hudson could afford one, I am investigating to submit a plan for town council approval. if it is feasible.

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Community Assessment: I conference called with Wyoming Business Council and I have an additional meeting set next week to find out if WBC can help Hudson prepare an assessment of the town's needs for economic development, providing an enticing environment and population growth. We will need several community members appointed to a committee to be involved in the process, but I need more information before I start this process. More to come ...

Rental House Listing: The town council decided to list the sale of the town's property with a realtor. Home Source Realty and agent Tiffany Dornblaser will list the property for sale.

Sherry

**CLERK – TREASURER REPORT**

**July 2023**

The Clerk/Treasurer office has been remarkably busy this past month. A lot of time was spent completing the budget, but we got it completed and are ready for the new fiscal year!

We worked on health insurance a lot in June, and after filling out tons of forms, finally got a policy locked in. We are waiting for cards for all full-time employees.

I have had a couple of small successes in collection efforts of past due utilities. I put a notice on the bills this month and included a note with the past due accounts. It will be a process, but I think it will be worth it in revenue in the end. We will start with a letter, then follow up with a certified letter with a deadline for payment in full or entering into a payment contract, if that does not work, we will shut off their water. Water will not be turned back on until full payment has been made and additional charges paid if we must put in a new curb stop to shut off the water. A last resort will be to take them to small claims court and/or file a lien on the property.

I met with a realtor from Home Source Realty, and she is working on getting a listing put together for the vacant rental house owned by the town. She could not find any comparable properties to work with so she produced what she believes will be a fair price and thinks it will sell quickly.

We received a nice donation to the cemetery from Hal Heron in memory of Dessie Bebout. Dessie's daughter, Ruby, requested some of the donation be used to place sod on Dessie's grave. It was decided to use some of the donated funds to place sod on all the bare spots in the cemetery. Kim figured all the bare spots can be covered with just short of 260 sq.ft. of sod, which is not very much and should lay quickly. I used my personal connections and will have the sod picked up and delivered the morning of Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup> so Kim and her helper can get it put down. This should please several families who have expressed concern about the lack of grass on their loved one's graves, as well as make our cemetery look better.

There have been several cremation burials of late with more scheduled. It is sad so many of Hudson's older residents are passing, it is the end of an era.

The Town opened a workers compensation claim for Kim when she was bit by dogs during her meter reading rounds. A notice was put in the newsletter that any aggressive animals will be sprayed with deterrent if necessary.

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The motor grader and dodge pickup “Notice of Sale” via sealed bid will be published this week and will be opened on July 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm.

As you know there is a special public meeting to be held on July 26 to discuss the necessary rise in utility rates to cover the loan payment for the new water meter project. I have published it online, in the newsletter, and posted it at the usual locations around town. I will post it again as the date gets closer to try and get more residents involved.

I attended a free training in Idaho Falls presented by Xpress Bill Pay system. We use this system for our auto pay and online payment customers. It was a slow-moving trip through tourist traffic around Jackson, but it was a day well spent. I appreciate all the training I can get to help me in my position. I am registering for other upcoming training courses. There is a mini Caselle training in Cheyenne in late August and the bigger Caselle yearly conference in Salt Lake in mid-October. I am registered to attend both trainings as they cover different areas of the program I use. I have signed up for a few free webinars as well and watch them in the evenings at home since my days in the office do not allow me to sit and watch a webinar without interruption.

We are working to see if we can get help in the office with the phones, filing, and other small, but time-consuming, projects. It would be nice if we could get Taylor back again.

I continue to receive phone calls regarding the mosquito spraying in town. Residents either do not want spray near their property, or they feel the sprayers are not spraying enough locations around town. I tell them to place signage up for no spray and try to reassure them that the sprayer is getting as many areas as they can, but we do not know who may be doing the spraying at any given time as they come over from Lander as a courtesy to help Hudson.

I have also received a couple of very cranky and rude telephone messages about water not being in the person’s ditch. She does not leave her number, and the number we have on file is no longer valid, so I cannot phone her back to tell her the town is not responsible for water in the ditch.

I will be out of the office the last week of this month. We will be flying back to New York to help move our daughter and her husband to Nebraska where she will begin teaching at the University in Lincoln. She is recovering from surgery, and he is an OTR truck driver who must take his truck to Nebraska and transfer to their terminal there. We will be driving her car and the U-Haul. I am simply happy to have them on this side of the Mississippi River! I will take my laptop and be able to work remotely while I am out of the office. I am appreciative of the mayor’s indulgence and the customers’ understanding of my time off!

I was wishful that we would be meeting in Town Hall this month, but obviously, the contractors did not grant my wish. They are getting closer. The sheetrock and paint are complete, cabinets are in with countertops to follow soon. We are told the flooring should go quickly and start this week. The plumbing will be the last item to be completed. Then once we have our IT person get our network back up and running, we will move back into Town Hall. There will be much work needed to get situated back into our offices and able to function again, but we are excited for that day to come! Again, I cannot stress enough how grateful I am to the Fire Department for offering us a temporary (okay semi-permanent) location to work in and for putting up with me and the chaos that follows me around. Your generosity is greatly appreciated! It has been a long seven months, and I am hoping it does not turn into eight!

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Water Treatment Plant Report to Council

July 11, 2023

The Treatment Plant Produced 1,685,132 Gallons in the Month of June 2023, averaging 56,171 gallons per day.

The June Bacteriological sample was collected and made it to the State Lab in Cheyenne on time and was satisfactory.

An air relief valve has been ordered for the sample point to discharge air in the line at plant start up. I had discussed this with James Brough, State Engineer with the DEQ and he agreed to the installation during the Sanitary Survey last month.

Some quirks on the HACH 5300sc turbidity meter controller remain on LPM #1

A copy of the inventory and status of the fire hydrants was furnished to the fire department.

The backflow preventer at the irrigation system at Memorial Park was inspected and failed testing. The parts have not arrived, but the backflow tech did disassemble it last week to clean and inspect the inside hoping to make it stop leaking and pass certification. There is an internal crack in one component and the primary O ring seal was rotted and improper seals installed in the controller. The repair kit on order will have all the items necessary for the necessary repairs. The backflow preventer was nonfunctional as a backflow preventer. This is a necessary piece of equipment for protecting our drinking water distribution system from contamination and cannot be field repaired by uncertified personnel. Previous repairs were only attempts to stop the leaking at the backflow preventer.

The backflow preventer at the Water Plant into the Permanganate chemical feed system was replaced with a double check valve by City Plumbing.

The CCR (Consumer Confidence Report) for calendar year 2022 has been completed and posted on the town's website and copies hung at the post office. The certification has been signed by the mayor and sent to the EPA.

Harry passed his level 2 Water Treatment Plant Test. His lagoon license is expiring at the end of the year and needs to get his continuing credits for renewal.

A suggested work schedule was presented that is completely flexible except for the rotating weekends which must be adhered to unless approved by the mayor or myself until I retire.

I am taking two weeks off starting July 10. I will not be available until July 22. I will be handing my phone over to Harry who has authority over the WTP and Distribution System.

Don

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July Council Report 2023

6/19/23-6/23/23

This week started off by having some summer help. Kadance started on Monday of this week. Started out by getting all the parks mowed once again. With all the rain, we have to mow almost every week. Lagoons and lift station are running well. This week we discharged at about 40,000 gallons per 24-hour period. There were no problems to speak of. We will try to get to the grounds again next week. Meter reading went well until I, made it to 108 N Ohio. After I read the meter, the lady let three dogs out and they attacked me. I was bitten on the arm and calf. The Sherriff was called, and the mayor and her husband lent a hand with my wounds. I am incredibly grateful for their help. I went to the emergency room for treatment, and the rest of the meters were estimated.

A resident needed sandbags due to an irrigation ditch running high and flooding his property. Down by river on second street.

I have been training at the water plant almost every day this week in the mornings. I am learning how to do the bare minimum to run the plant. I think I am slowly getting it.

6/25/23 – 7/01/23

This week started off by getting trucks and equipment up and running. I got the part for the zero steer and mower blades all fixed and ready to go for the week. I also finished the stripping of the diesel mower by removing the blower and clam shell to enable easier operations with mowing the grounds we have.

I switched all my equipment from the Ford diesel to the white chevy. The mayor wants us to use more fuel-efficient trucks for our daily activities. The new ford truck will go to the water plant once we find the parts to fix and replace the seat and tail gate. The ford 350 will be used primarily as a heavy haul and fuel truck.

We weeded the house by the water plant to have it ready for the realtor. All signs and fire hydrants have been weeded and we got a good start on the lagoon grounds where the brush hog does not mow. Kadance is working well so far. She needs a bit of direction from time to time, but she works hard. Apparently, we will only have her until the end of July so she can do fair and then go back to school.

We ended the week with the mowing of all the parks and the cemetery. Parks are weeded and the cemetery will be done Monday the 3.<sup>rd</sup> The zero steer has a charging issue now. We had to tow it to the maintenance building on Thursday. We will see if we can fix it in house. This mower has a lot of age, and we should consider trading it in on a new one when possible.

6/23-7/8/23

Monday, we weeded the cemetery. Also sprayed weeds around maintenance buildings and town all along with other problem areas needing addressed. WTP training continues. I am beginning to gain a bit of confidence. We trimmed up all the trees that needed it at Memorial Park.

The park controllers still need to be replaced. I am not sure after the latest round of vandalism at the park that it even works, and we were having issues with the Memorial Park one last year. Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> we did the quarterly labs and e coli dropped off at Riverton. Continued WPT training to know how to operate water plant on every other weekend. All branches have been cleaned up throughout town from the windstorm on Monday afternoon. `

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My first weekend at the water plant by myself went ok. I had a couple of little issues, but I figured it out.

MOTION: Councilman Zeke Bonella moved to approve the department reports, seconded by Councilman Archie Hanson. The motion unanimously passed.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**BUSINESS READY GRANT PROGRESS** – The Clerk has a quarterly report due this week. Need to contact Ryan and get update4s for reporting on the grant funds. Mayor Oler stated she would get a better contact number for the progress reports.

Mayor Oler reported on her meeting with Bobby last week regarding annexation. Frank's would like to see what benefit it would be to them to annex. Mayor Oler also reported that Frank's is planning to double their production. Councilman, Zeke Bonella inquired about whether the town could support their water needs if that were to happen. Don Rood would have to report if the town wells could handle and what the capacity is for the wells.

Discussion continued regarding how much water would or could be allotted to Frank's. It would be easier if they were annexed in. If they choose to not annex, we could cut off their water or ration it when necessary. Sewer capacity was also discussed. Mayor Oler will get with Kim and Don and do more research.

**CLOSURE OF TOWN HALL/INSURANCE CLAIM:** The flooring is supposed to be going in this week. So far, Gale's flooring has not been working on the floor. Mayor Oler will contact them. Flooring should take a week then the plumber will be in to complete the work in the bathrooms. The kitchen countertop was cut short, and they are waiting for a replacement.

**UTILITY RATE INCREASE:** There is a Special Public Meeting Scheduled for July 25, 2023, at 6:00 to discuss the substantial raise in utility rates necessary to cover the loan payments for new water meters. This has been published in the newsletter, online and posted in the usual locations in town. This is the same meeting Mayor Anderson facilitated last August, but the rate increase was never implemented through resolution.

Town Clerk Shoopman reported she has already heard from several angry residents about the increase. Mayor Oler asked that we have the rates available for Riverton and Lander for the meeting. Kathy will get this information.

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

**VACANT COUNCIL SEAT** – Discuss vacant council seat and any interest or nominations. Mayor Oler reported that we have received one interested party for the vacant council seat. The council would like to interview any interested parties prior to the next Town Council Meeting. Kathy will set up interviews for 5:30 pm on August 8, prior to the meeting.

**VACANT RENTAL HOUSE**- The Realtor looked at the house and is preparing a listing. She believes she has a fair asking price in mind and that it will sell quickly. Mayor Oler shared an email from the realtor that came in shortly before the meeting. The realtor advised that the property could bring between \$35,000 - \$47,000 and could start the listing range between \$49,000 up to \$55,000.

Councilman, Archie Hanson moved to approve the mayor to sign and list the property. Motion was seconded by Councilman, Zeke Bonella and motion carried unanimously. Kathy will contact the realtor and get the listing prepared.

**UTILITY RATE INCREASE:** The utility rates will increase with the July bills per the regular scheduled \$0.25 increase to both water and sewer rates. A reminder was published in the newsletter and will be posted online when the bills go out in July. The question was asked if the scheduled increase would continue after the rise in billing is implemented. The resolution states that the \$0.25 increase to water and sewer will continue until the resolution is repealed. So yes, it is set to continue. It was noted that per State Statute, the water and sewer departments are required to be self-supporting.

**THANK YOU:** The Mayor stated that the Town would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Atlantic City Federal Credit Union, its employees and Brian Rohrbacher and Bub Parker for the Flags at Gold Star Memorial Park and all their help with sandbagging. Mayor Oler will draft a letter of thanks to them.

**SALE OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT:** Mayor Oler stated that the town would also like to list for bid the military dump truck. With having the old state yellow dump truck, the military dump truck is not necessary to keep.

Councilman Zeke Bonella moved that the Town list the military dump truck for sale via sealed bids. Motion was seconded by Councilman Archie Hanson. The motion passed unanimously.

**PROPERTY LIENS AND COLLECTION OF PAST DUE ACCOUNTS:** The Town is getting aggressive with collections of past due utility accounts. Some have gone unpaid for many months.



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Town Clerk, Kathy Shoopman, stated that she has included information in the newsletter and on the utility bills as well as online that the Town is going to be aggressive on collection and outlined the process she is currently following. She stated she has had some success on some accounts but there are still many that are past due. Kathy also reported that at the recent training she attended, she learned of some ways to use the Xpress Bill Pay program to set up automatic payments on a schedule for past due accounts rather than rely on the resident to make payments at their discretion.

Mayor Oler and Town Clerk Shoopman will work together to write up a procedure for collections that will be followed and present it at next month's meeting. In the meantime, a discussion was held on what the threshold should be for filing a property lien on the owner's property for unpaid utility bills. While the town has the right to turn off the water to the property when the account is not paid after 45 days, the council agreed that there should be a lien filed on property if the utility bills continue to be unpaid or unsettled after six months. The property owner is responsible for the bill and if water is shut off to the property and the property has sold, the bill must be brought current before services will be restored.

**SEWER LAGOON ISSUES:** Mayor Oler reported that she and Maintenance Foreman, Kim Houle met with HDR Engineering regarding the repairs needed at the sewer lagoons. Mayor Oler stated that she is investigating grant availability from Rural Development and will keep the Council apprised.

**PART-TIME LAW ENFORCEMENT:** Mayor Oler reported that she would like to investigate getting a part-time law enforcement officer for Hudson. She spoke with Shoshoni Police Chief, Chris Konija about how they were able to get a police department funded. Chief Konija offered any help he could give to help Hudson. Discussion was held about the requirements and steps to go through. Council was receptive and in agreement that they would like to pursue the opportunity of having a local law enforcement officer for Hudson. Mayor Oler will continue to research and keep the council informed of her findings.

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There being no further business, Councilman Archie Hanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Zeke Bonella seconded the motion. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

**Attest:**

**Approved:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Clerk/Treasurer, Kathy Shoopman**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor, Sherry Oler**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Councilman, Zeke Bonella**

*Excused*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Councilman, Brady Hamilton**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Councilman, Archie Hanson**

DRAFT